DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 336 805 CS 507 605

AUTHOR DeCotis, John
TITLE Insuring a Quality Education for Your Children: A Guide for Parents.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 27p.
AVAILABLE FROM John DeCotis, 210 Stonewall Ave., Fayetteville, GA 30214 ($1.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Parent Participation; *Parent Role; *Parent School Relationship; *Parent Student Relationship; Public Schools; Whole Language Approach
IDENTIFIERS *Communication Context

ABSTRACT

This booklet offers parents an overview of the elements crucial for a good education, with the intention of motivating them to take an active role in their children's education. The booklet's 21 sections are as follows: (1) What is an education? (2) Why get a good education? (3) What composes a good education? (4) Is communication important? (5) What can be done at home? (6) Can computers be helpful? (7) Can television be helpful? (8) Can too much pressure be detrimental? (9) Are private schools a good alternative? (10) What is Special Education and what services does it offer? (11) What are Talented and Gifted programs? (12) Who determines curricula in public schools? (13) What are standardized tests and why are they given? (14) How are public schools accredited? (15) Should schools teach higher order thinking skills or facts and information? (16) Are the fine arts and physical education an essential part of a "good" education? (17) What are developmental education and developmental teaching strategies? (18) What is the "whole language" approach to reading? (19) What will the school of the future be like? (20) What is the answer? and (21) Thoughts for the future. (SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED336805

INSURING A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR YOUR CHILDREN

A Guide for Parents

by John DeCotis, Ed.S.
Fayette County School System

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John DeCotis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS507605

Copyright 1989
All Rights Reserved. Any reproduction without permission of the author is strictly prohibited.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PREFACE

As parents, one of our major concerns is the education of our children. The education of a child should not be left up to teachers alone. We, as parents, must take an active role to insure a quality education for our children. The author of this booklet, John DeCotis, addresses this topic and gives an overview of the elements crucial for a good education.

It is a pleasure for us to have the opportunity to publish the booklet, "Insuring a Quality Education for Your Children." Each of us will look forward to a brighter future if we will take the time to read and implement the ideas presented by John DeCotis, a well-respected educator in the Fayette County School System.

John & Allyson Griffies, Publishers
Sir Speedy Printing Center
College Park, GA

INSURING A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR YOUR CHILDREN
A Guide for Parents

I What is an education?

II Why get a good education?

III What composes a good education?
- A. Quality teachers
- B. Sufficient funding
- C. Updated education
- D. Parental involvement
- E. Discipline

IV Is communication important?
- A. General communication
- B. Conferences with school officials
- C. Be aware!
- D. Stay informed!

V What can be done at home?
- A. Establish a study place and time
- B. Have education materials available
- C. Spend time with your child
- D. Be positive

VI Can computers be helpful?
- A. A supplemental tool
- B. Recreational tool

VII Can television be helpful?
- A. Educational supplement
- B. Recreational tool

XVIII Can too much pressure be detrimental?
- A. Goals may be unrealistic
- B. All students need recreation

IX Are private schools a good alternative?
A. Each has a different philosophy and goal
B. Public education

X What is Special Education and what services does it offer?

XI What are Talented and Gifted Programs?

XII Who determines curricula in public schools?

XIII What are standardized tests and why are they given?

XIV How are Public Schools Accredited?

XV Should Schools Teach Higher Order Thinking Skills or Facts and Information?

XVI Are the Fine Arts and Physical Education an Essential Part of a "Good" Education?

XVII What are Developmental Education and Developmental Teaching Strategies?

XVIII What Is The "Whole Language" Approach to Reading?

XVIX What Will The School of the Future Be Like?

XX What is the answer?

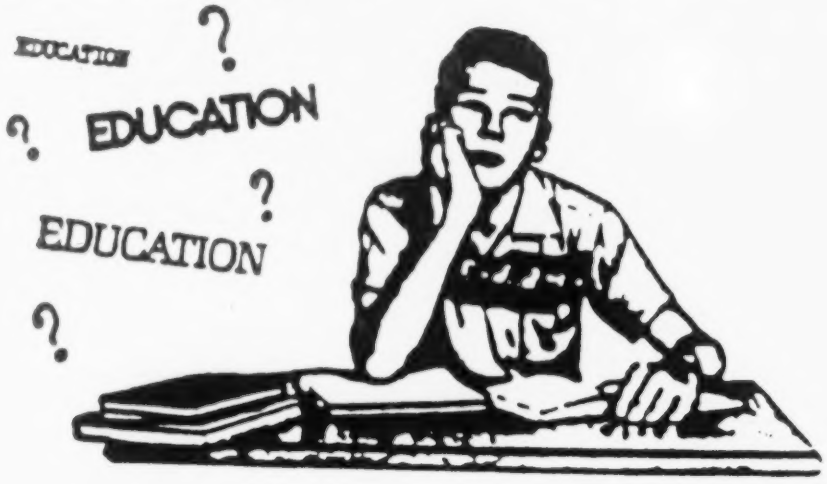
XXI Thoughts for the future

I. What Is An Education?

Throughout history, this subject has been debated. However, to this date, there has not been one easily devised definition. It would be easier to list the characteristics of the educated person. These characteristics can be compiled into six descriptions: The educated person will be: 1. Disciplined in his/her approach to life; 2. Trained with specific career and vocational skills; 3. Knowledgable in general of life; 4. A problem solver in viewing, assessing and implementing solutions; 5. Aware of the feelings of people, places and times; 6. Enlightened as to the fine qualities of the human experience. Education, although taking place all of the time, usually is provided in a formal sense through the institution called school. Since schools have been in existence for centuries, and have a wide variety of approaches, they are all not the same. Therefore education can take various forms. Some institutions stress job training, some human enlightenment, while others stress problem solving. Generally, education is complicated and diverse. Therefore to categorically define education is impossible, since it is a variety of experiences. Your concern, as parents, is to insure that your offspring receive a quality education. As parents, you should look for the development of the characteristics of an educated person in your child. If your child is being educated, he or she should display discipline, training, knowledge, problem solving, awareness and enlightenment. This should be evident to you in a positive display of your child's maturity level, performance in schoolwork and general outlook toward school.

II. Why Get A Good Education?

Since you now know what characteristics to look for in your children, why should you insure that these are fostered in them? Do your children often ask, "Why do I need a good education?" Well, an education is important! Unfortunately, the reasons to be educated are varied and not easily packaged. However, they can be summarized in one statement, "quality of life". Ultimately an educated person will enjoy a higher quality of life than if he/she was not educated. This would be most evident in that person's career opportunities and self-fulfillment. This will inevitably result in a higher income and level of happiness in life. On a larger scale, an education is very important for the future of our nation. With a quality education program, our nation will maintain its leadership role in the world. This includes political, economical, technological and the quality or standard of living. Therefore an education is necessary for citizens to carry out the responsibilities of living in a highly industrial, technological and democratic society. Consequently, an education is essential. The higher the quality of your child's education, the better his/her life will be. In addition to this, the higher will be the quality of the life of our nation.



III. What Composes A Good Education?

To parents and educators alike, this question is complicated. Therefore to simplify the dilemma, a good education will be defined. A good education is an experience that results in a positive and qualitative change in behavior. Notably this would display the characteristics of an educated person. To insure this, parents must be sure that their offspring are exposed to the following:

a. Quality teachers
b. Sufficient facilities and equipment
c. Updated education
d. Parental involvement
e. Discipline

To determine what composes a good education, it is necessary to briefly describe the characteristics listed:

A. Quality Teachers

What is a quality teacher? It is someone with six years of college? Is it someone who is expert in his/her field? Is it someone whose students pass all of his/her courses? The answer to all of these questions is NO! A quality teacher is someone who teaches a student enough to develop the characteristics of an educated person. This is the person you want teaching your child. For the most part, this quality can be insured by the leadership of the principal of a school.

B. Sufficient Facilities and Equipment

Does your child's school have enough funds to provide for quality instruction? (Good teachers, up-to-date textbooks, instructional aids, computers.) If not, this will significantly affect the quality of education that your child receives. These all supplement the activities of a quality program and are just as important.

C. Updated Education

Is your child's school up with the times? Does it meet the needs of your child and the community? Does it try to acquire the latest equipment and technologies for training? Does it teach your child how to function in, learn and cope with a changing society? If not, then your child may not be getting the quality education that he/she deserves.

D. Parental Involvement

Do you as a parent value education? Do you as a parent set positive examples as a participating member of a democratic society? Do you as a parent put the interest of your child's education ahead of your own personal interests? Do you, as a parent, keep abreast of your child's school work and other activities?

If the answer to any of these questions is no or maybe, it puts your child at an educational disadvantage. The school must then work not only to educate your child, but also to overcome this deficit. If you, as a parent, can become actively involved in the education of your child, your child will truly benefit.

E. Discipline

This characteristic, although not more important than the others, is the most obvious. An undisciplined person or school will result in chaos and little or no learning. To teach, a teacher must have classroom discipline and to learn, a student must have self-discipline. To insure both, the parent must support the school's actions and encourage student self-discipline. If the school, the student and parent are not willing to accept their responsibilities, the overall discipline will be poor. Consequently, the quality of education will be poor.

IV. Is Communication Important?

The answer to this question is an absolute yes! In fact, not only is communication important, but it is the key. Since the goals of the parent and the school are the same, they must establish a rapport that will enhance this goal.

A. General Communication

It is not uncommon for parents and school to work against each other even though they have the same goal in common. This usually results when rapport has not been established between the parent and the school. Consequently, this results in both parties mistrusting and/or being intimidated by the other. Unfortunately, in this situation the student gets the upper hand since it is very easy to play one party against the other. Ultimately, this results in the student not accepting responsibility and therefore, not getting the most from his/her education.

With this in mind, the question that arises is "What can the parent do?" The answer to this is obvious but not so simple. As a parent, you must contact the teacher or school to become familiar with the policies and procedures of your child's teacher. In addition to this, you should read carefully the student handbook that is given to your child at the beginning of the school year. Finally, as a concerned parent, it is important for you to become familiar with the school calendar. This will make you aware of most of the school activities. In addition, it will make you aware of when report cards and progress checks are supposed to be brought home. Although this seems like a great deal of information to keep up with, it will insure that you can continuously follow your child's academic progress.

B. Conferences With School Officials

As a parent, your responsibilities are many and your free time sparse. However, when it comes to your child, it is important that you take the time to meet with school officials when necessary. Whether the conference is requested by you or by the school, this is an opportune time to discuss your concerns with your child's education. In a conference, you as a parent have the opportunity to ask pertinent questions and to provide important information concerning your son or daughter. Ultimately, conferences with school officials are necessary to keep open channels of communication. Feel welcome to contact your child's teacher or principal. They are professionals who are concerned with your child's welfare. They welcome your communication and are willing to help you in any way they can.

In conferences with school officials, always try to be objective. Even though you want the best for your child, you must realize that not all problems have a simple solution. The school has certain standards and guidelines, and these must be considered in dealing with your child's particular situation. The school wants what is best for your child. Try to work with them to understand your child and to help your child.

C. Be Aware

As a parent, it is necessary to take the time to be aware of your child's educational program. Make it your business to insure that your child's needs are being met.

D. Stay Informed

Since it is necessary to take the time to be aware of your child's educational program, it is also more important to stay informed of this program. To be aware is fine but only as long as you stay informed.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

V. What Can Be Done At Home?

Although the home differs from person to person, the home should serve as a base and as an extension of the educational system.

A. Establish A Study Place and Time

Even though your child attends school approximately 6½ hours per day, this is not enough to thoroughly educate him/her. To complete long term assignments or complete classwork, it is necessary for your child to study at home. However, more importantly, it is necessary for your child to study at home so as to reinforce what was learned in school. Therefore it is necessary that you set aside a quiet time and space each day so that your child may study. Without your support, your child will not develop good study habits.

B. Have Educational Materials Available

Most people hold the belief that if a child comes from a home with concerned parents and access to books and reference materials, he/she will be at an educational advantage. This, for the most part, is true. However, if the parents and students do not value these materials, the student will lose this advantage. Therefore, as concerned parents it is not only important to procure these materials, but to use them frequently to supplement your child's educational program.

C. Spend Time With Your Child

Teachers do not reach every need of each individual child and students do not learn everything that teachers intend that they learn. Therefore, it is important for you as a parent to spend time helping your child with school related problems. If these problems are beyond your help, then it may be necessary to procure professional help. However, there is no substitute for your time. Your child will know then that he/she has your support.

D. Be Positive

When it comes to school and your child's education, be positive and enthusiastic. With this attitude, your child will follow suit. Consequently, this will enhance his/her preception of school.

VI. Can Computers Be Helpful?

As with all supplemental aids, a computer can be significantly helpful if it is used appropriately.

A. Supplemental Tool

Since our society is changing from an industrial base to an information processing base, it is very important that your child learn to operate a computer. This may range from basic key punching to in-depth programming. Of course, this depends on the goals and aspirations of your child as well as the program available at your child's school. However, with all of this in mind, the computer must not replace the basic curriculum or the teacher. Rather, it should supplement the existing educational program. As a supplemental tool, the computer can be used for individual manipulation of all kinds of basic educational skills (e.g. math problems, spelling, vocabulary, map-skills, writing, word processing). However, without these basic educational skills, your child will not have the proper foundation to be fully prepared for life. As a teacher, the computer can serve as an enormous warehouse of information. However, it cannot replace a warm, caring human being who interacts with and understands the whole child. Therefore, computers can be helpful and are helpful if they are used appropriately as a supplemental aid.

B. Recreational Reinforcer

Since a computer can be very effective as a supplemental tool, it may at the same time serve as a recreational reinforcer. As a recreational reinforcer, the computer can be used to make school work fun, interesting and challenging. This, at the same time, will give your child a break from the normal routine of school. In fact, your child may enjoy computer time so much, he/she may not even realize that he/she is learning. Ultimately, this results in the computer being used for recreation, while at the same time it is reinforcing educational skills.

VII. Can Television Be Helpful?

As a supplemental tool and with discretion, television can be a very useful tool.

A. Educational Supplement

Since television has been in existence, it has been questioned in many ways. At times it is accused of educationally damaging children, however, at other times it is praised for excellent educational programming. Whatever it's reputation, it does have the potential to be used as a practical and easily accessible educational supplement. Your decision as a parent is to either allow or prevent this tool from being realized. Several networks are known for specific educational programming while others are not. It is therefore your role as a parent to recognize those TV programs that can educationally benefit your child and those that cannot. With this in mind, the school will from time to time recommend or suggest that your child watch particular shows at home that can supplement a particular unit being covered in school at that time. In addition to this, video tapes of a variety of educational shows are shown in school and are available through certain organizations. Therefore, television can be a useful educational supplement if it is used with discretion.

B. Recreational Tool

As the computer, television can be used for recreational purposes. Again, as with the computer, your child may be enjoying himself/herself while learning. Of course your discretion is important so that your child is using his/her recreational time wisely. If not monitored, television viewing may be wasted time, rather than a stimulating recreational break.

VIII. Can Too Much Pressure Be Detrimental?

Your child, as all other human beings, can be adversely affected by too much pressure. Your concern as a parent is to assist the school in helping to set a program that is both challenging and realistic.

A. Goals Must Be Realistic

To avoid putting too much pressure on your child, it is important that you, as a parent, meet with your child's teacher to set realistic goals. As a parent, you know your child better than the school does. However, the teacher and the school see your child in an educational environment and have the opportunity to compare your child to other children. You may know what your child is capable of doing, but your child's teacher may be familiar with some particular problem your child is having in reaching his/her potential. Therefore, meet with your child's teacher and use his/her recommendations to appropriately place your child in a challenging educational program. Be careful not to judge your child's aptitude simply by what you see at home. The school and your child's teachers want what is best for your child. Use this information to place your child appropriately. Ultimately, this will help to prevent your child from being placed in a pressured situation where he/she must struggle to perform minimum standards.

B. All Students Need Recreation

Since it was discussed that too much pressure is not good for your child, it is important that you, as a parent, not only allow recreation time, but encourage it. All human beings deserve a break from their daily pressures. Recreation, if used appropriately, not only provides this break, but it also provides for a productive outlet for the mind and body. Most students perform better on their school work after a break, (e.g. recess). Therefore, encourage your child to engage in a constructive use of recreational time, for example, hobbies, television, computers, or general play.

IX. Are Private Schools A Good Alternative?

In certain circumstances private schools may seem like good alternatives to public education. In some cases this can be positive whereas in others it can be negative.

A. Each Private School Has Its Own Philosophy And Reason For Existence

The public school system was founded in the belief that all Americans are entitled to a fair and equal opportunity to a free education. Of course, public schools are not always equal. This, of course, results from a variety of reasons, (e.g. funding, staffing specific programs). Private schools on the other hand, have been established to educate children in a way that the sponsoring group feels is the appropriate or right way, (e.g. religious schools, college prep, vocational, progressive, etc.). These schools, for the most part, have their own philosophy or mission and their own specific goals. For the most part these schools are selective. Depending on your philosophy as a parent, the private school can be an alternative to public education. Whether or not it is a viable or good alternative depends upon your philosophy and goals as a parent.

B. Public Education

Public education in the United States provides services to students of all religions, races, income levels, interests and abilities. Consequently, it can service your child regardless of his/her needs. As a parent, it is important that you inquire into the extensive repertoire of programs that the public schools offer. The public school will try hard to meet the needs of your child. Let the school know what services your child needs.

X. What Is Special Education And What Services Does It Offer?

Special Education is a federally mandated program that provides prescribed services to students with special needs. The criteria used to determine whether or not a child qualifies is determined at the state level. Since this criteria is based on severity of need, not all children with learning problems or special needs will qualify for these services. In cases such as these, careful planning between the parents and teachers must take place so that the child's needs are being met.

For more information concerning the Special Education services at your local school, please contact your child's teacher.

XI. What Are Talented And Gifted Programs?

In some systems these programs come under the auspices of the Special Education Program. In others, these programs are an entity in themselves.

For the most part, gifted and talented programs service students that meet specified criteria on both aptitude and ability tests. One misconception that exists is that any student who has all A's should qualify for these programs. On the contrary, this program services students who have significant strengths in certain academic and cognitive areas. Generally, these programs provide activities that are of higher order thinking skills. In addition, some of these programs are content oriented, while others are more activity oriented.

For more information on your local school's gifted and talented programs, please contact your child's teacher.

XII. Who Determines Curricula In Public Schools?

Curricula or curriculum for the most part is determined and formulated at the local level. To start, the state provides a list of the approved textbooks that are available to the school systems for adoption. The local systems will then choose those texts that best fit their curriculum.

To decide on curriculum, the local system will select a committee of teachers, administrators, parents, community members and sometimes students to review current programs and texts. This committee after thorough study will then write a curriculum that will best suit their needs. Once this is completed, the new curriculum will be presented to the local Board of Education for adoption. This process will also involve the selection of a textbook from the state adoption list. This process takes place every four to five years in each subject. In addition, in some states it is required that a core curriculum be taught throughout the state. However, each local system develops its own curriculum with this state core curriculum as its base.

XIII. What Are Standardized Tests And Why Are They Given?

Standardized tests are tests that are given so that students in one school and/or school system can be compared to students in another school and/or school system. The word "standardized" infers that the tests given to the testing population are exactly the same, and that they are given under the same time restrictions. There are a variety of standardized tests that school systems will administer. However, the two main types are "criterion referenced" (CRT) and "norm referenced" (NRT). In criterion referenced tests, students are measured against how much of the criteria or material they know. With norm referenced tests, students are measured against other students' responses to the same questions. In some states these tests are mandated to determine the promotion, retention, and/or graduation of students.

The use of standardized tests results varies from school to school or system to system. However, for the most part, these results are used to determine the academic status of a student and to address the areas of need. In addition, schools and school systems can determine the effectiveness of their instructional programs and to make plans for improvement. In some states these tests are used to compare one school system to another. Since standardized tests are only one indication of a student's ability or progress, they should not be used as the only criteria to evaluate a student's or a school's effectiveness.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

XIV. How are Public Schools Accredited?

This is a question that is asked by a number of people being served by our public school systems throughout the nation. Since most public school systems are accredited by a number of different organizations, this process can sometimes be confusing. To clarify the types of the agencies and the processes involved, listed below is a brief description of each.

A. Regional Association of Colleges and Schools (RACS) - This is a regional organization composed of members from colleges or universities and public and private schools. Each geographic region of the country has a "RACS" accrediting commission. The standards that this organization set are programs or curriculum oriented and are based on sound educational research. Every five years, member schools must go through an extensive self-study. In addition, these standards are rated on an annual basis. If a school system fails to meet "RACS" Standards, they are subject to losing their accreditation. Parents are encouraged to participate in the "RACS" self-study-peer evaluation process.

B. State Accrediting Commission - This is a statewide organization that is composed of professional educators. These standards are rated on an annual basis.

C. State Department of Education Public School Standards Agency - This organization is a branch of the state department of education. The standards set here are concerned mainly with time and monetary allocations, these are generally devised by the professionals who work for the state department. Failure to meet these standards may result in a loss of state funds for education. These standards are checked on an annual basis.

As you can see, these organizations take great care to insure that public schools have a high quality program

of education. However, with any accrediting agency, these organizations require that an enormous amount of time and effort be committed to complete all of the documentation and paperwork involved. In addition, even though these organizations set school standards, they rarely provide funds to meet those standards.

It is hoped that this information will answer some of the questions concerning accreditation. If you have any further questions or require more information, please call your child's school. You will find the principal quite knowledgeable in this area.

XV. Should Schools Teach Higher Order Thinking Skills or Facts and Information?

This question is asked frequently and it has no easily defined answer. Every educator knows that students must be knowledgeable about the world around them. At the same time, each student must be able to apply the knowledge that he/she has acquired. Consequently, it seems that schools should first impart knowledge as a solid base for each student. Then, once this is accomplished, it is the responsibility of the school to insure that all students are taught how to problem solve, think and apply this knowledge. If a school concentrates only on information and knowledge or only on higher order thinking skills, the student will be lacking some very important skills and be at an educational disadvantage. Therefore, it can be concluded that schools should teach both higher order thinking skills and facts and information.

XVI. Are the Fine Arts and Physical Education an Essential Part of a "Good" Education?

The answer to this question is a resounding YES! A well-rounded education has components from each of the three domains through which a child learns. These domains are: the physical/psychomotor domain, the emotional/affective domain and the cognitive/intellectual domain. Through preparing a child in each of these domains it is hoped that he/she will become a well-rounded, well-educated person. To become a well-rounded citizen in a democratic society, a person should have physical health and awareness, intellectual capabilities and a spirit or feeling of well being. Through the teaching of art, music, drama, band/orchestration, physical education and other related subjects, it is hoped that children will become well-rounded citizens. In addition, it is hoped that through the offering of these programs, students can discover areas of interest and strength within a total and well balanced school curriculum.

XVII. What are Developmental Education and Developmental Teaching Strategies?

Developmental education and teaching is based on the premise that children learn at different rates depending on their developmental readiness to perform certain tasks or skills. At the early childhood or primary grades, teachers generally use developmental strategies so that these young children are not forced to perform tasks before they are mentally or physically ready. For instance, it is not developmentally sound to try to teach a child to write in cursive if he/she has not yet mastered printing. In addition, in a developmentally appropriate classroom, students are allowed to progress at their own individual rate, based on readiness, not a prescribed curriculum or standard. Therefore, a child is neither advanced too quickly nor prevented from advancing when ready. The term "developmental" does not mean the same thing to all people. However, for you as an involved and concerned parent, "developmental" should mean child centered, flexible, enriched in curriculum and process oriented. (Hands-on applied learning.)

If you have any questions concerning "developmental" teaching, please contact your local school for further information.

XVIII. What Is The "Whole Language" Approach to Reading?

The term "Whole Language" is used to describe a method or format that is used to teach reading. Since "Whole Language" has very many organizational models and since it is difficult to easily define, listed below are the characteristics of a solid "Whole Language" program:

1. Reading, Language Arts, Spelling, Writing and Vocabulary are taught through the same materials. (i.e., a child reads stories, English exercises come out of the reading, spelling and vocabulary words come out of the reading, the writing process is based on the reading and children learn how they are all interrelated.)
2. An emphasis is placed on reading good literature rather than reading basals.
3. Other subject matter is related to the reading when possible.
4. Teachers have the flexibility to bring in supplemental materials to their reading lessons.
5. The emphasis is on reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The term "Whole Language" can be ambiguous. Contact your local school to find out how they define "Whole Language."

XVIX. What Will The School of the Future Be Like?

With the onset of the information age and the wealth of "new" research in the field of education, the school of the future will be structurally very different from our current model. Rather than being grade level oriented units, (i.e., for example, elementary K-5, middle 6-8, high school 9-12) the schools of the future will be organized by programs of study (i.e., for example performing arts schools, computer technology schools, continuous progress schools). These schools will have students clustered into groups of 50 to 60. In each group there will be one master teacher and 3 paraprofessionals assigned. Each teacher will coordinate, facilitate and evaluate his/her cluster of students. The paraprofessionals will be trained in computer and

technological skills so that they can work with small groups of students on assigned projects and tasks. The curriculum will be composed of a number of integrated subject matter units and/or programs. As an essential part of these programs, students will work individually and in small groups to plan, organize, present and evaluate several projects and programs in a formal way. Students will, through networking, and research investigate for projects by using a variety of resources. Formal evaluations of students will be conducted by the teacher. The student will be evaluated on a number of skills including: cooperative skills, higher order thinking skills, skills application, project success and information access.

As with our current schooling model, this new model will be funded through tax dollars. However, a great amount of business involvement and funding will supplement these schools. The school of the future will ultimately be innovative, exciting, effective and natural.

XX. What Is the Answer?

Education by nature is not simplistic. In fact, it is rather complicated. It amounts to the school and the parents working together to meet the needs of your child. As a parent, you can have input into your child's program by being aware and staying involved with the school. Remember, it is very important to keep up with your child's education. Communication is the key. The school will provide the services, but it is you who must insure that his/her needs are met.

XXI. Thoughts for the future

As parents your universe centers around the most important thing in the world, your child. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that you insure that he/she gets the best education possible. This will insure the highest quality of life possible. By using this guide, it is hoped you can take an active part in this process. Our society is changing from an industrial era to an information processing era. There-

fore, it is essential that your child's education be of the best quality possible. After all, his/her future and the future of our nation depend on it. To take an active part in your child's education, and cooperate with the school, is a step in the right direction. It is a step that is critical in the education of your child. As parents, be active or get involved, keep up with your child's school work and activities. In addition, contact your local legislatures, State Board of Education, local Board of Education and your local school.

Closing Statement

Since a quality education for your child and our nation is essential, become active in insuring a quality education. The quality of your child's life and that of our nation depend on it.